

Message Text

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

GAC-01 SAJ-01 MBFR-03 INRE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 RSR-01

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P R 061620 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9013

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T - D U E O M I S S I O N P A R A 4

E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: PINT, FR

SUBJ: THE NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

REF: PARIS 09346

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1. SUMMARY. WHILE PARSIDENT POMPIDOU AND PRIME MINISTER
MESSMER WERE WORKING ON FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT DURING

PAST WEEK (SEPTEL), THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WAS ORGANIZING INT PARLIMENTARY GROUPS AND STANDING COMMITTEES AND ELECTING OFFICIALS. EDGAR FAURE IS NEW ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT. PRESIDENTS OF SIX STANDING COMMITTEES ARE: FOREIGN AFFAIRS - MAURICE COUVE DE MURVILLE (UDR), DEFENSE- ALBERT VOILQUIER (INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN), FINANCE- FERNAND ICART (INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN), CONSTITUTIONAL LAW- JEAN FOYER (UDR), CULTURAL, FAMILY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS- HENRY BERGER (UDR), PRODUCTION AND EXCHANGE- JACQUES FOUCHIER (CENTER UNION). COUVE DE MURVILLE' S ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DOES NOT IN OUR VIEW, PORTEND RETURN TO HARD- LINE GUALLIST FOREIGN POLICIES WHICH HE SYMBOLIZES. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE PRESIDENTS DO NOT EXERCISE GREAT INFLUENCE ON GOF POLICY. HOWEVER, THE POSITION WILL GIVE COUVE A PRESTIGIOUS PLATFORM FOR EXPRESSING HIS VIEWS. THE CONTINUED DOMINATION OF ALL TOP COMMITTEE POSTS BY GOVERNMENT COALITION PARTIES IS IN CONTRAST TO PRESIDENT POMPIDOU' S MESSAGE TO THE ASSEMBLY (REFTEL) WHICH STRESSED HIS WILLINGNESS TO WORK CLOSELY WITH ALL ELEMENTS IN THE ASSEMBLY, INCLUDING THE OPPOSITION. IT WAS EXPECTED THAT REFORMERS AND EVEN SOCIALISTS MIGHT BE GIVEN A COMMITTEE PRESIDENCY. WHILE DEPUTIES BELONGING TO OPPOSITION PARTIES DID GET SUBORDINATE POSITIONS ON THE COMMITTEES, THE GOOD WILL GENERATED BY THE PRESIDENT' S MESSAGE AMONG OPPOSITION ELEMENTS WAS CONSIDERABLY DISSIPATED BY GOVERNMENT PARTY LEADERS RESERVING COMMITTEE PRESIDENCIES FOR THEMSELVES. EDGAR FAURE' S ELECTION AS ASSEMBLY PRESIDEN AND INTENSE COMPETITION FOR TOP ASSEMBLY POSTS INDICATE NEW ASSEMBLY EXPECTS TO PLAY A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE THAN ITS PREDECESSORS IN FIFTH REPUBLIC. END SUMMARY.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL GROUPS AS FOLLOWS:
 UDR- 183 DEPUTIES; INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS- 55; CENTER UNION- 30 (FORMERLY CALLED CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS- DUHAMEL- FONTANET GROUP. THE CU EMERGED FROM THE ELECTION WITH ONLY 25 DEPUTIES AND THE UDR WAS FORCED TO " LOAN" THEM FIVE DEPUTIES SO THAT THEY COULD FORM A PARLIAMENTARY GROUP). THESE GROUPS MAKE UP GOVERNMENT COALITION, WHICH THUS IS COMPOSED OF 268 DEPUTIES. COMMUNIST GROUP HAS 73 DEPUTIES; SOCIALIST AND LEFT RADICAL GROUP 102 DEPUTIES. THIS GIVES UNITED LEFT 175 DEPUTIES. REFORMERS HAVE 34 DEPUTIES. THERE ARE ALSO 13 INDEPENDENT DEPUTIES, OF WHOM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SIX ARE POLITICALLY RIGHT- OF- CENTER, FIVE ARE LEFT- OF- CENTER AND TWO LEAN TOWARDS THE REFORMERS. PRESIDENT OF PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS ARE: UDR- ROGER FREY; IR- AIME PAQUET; CENTER UNION- EUGENE CLAUDIUS- PETIT; REFORMERS- MICHEL DURAFOR; SOCIALIST/ LEFT RADICAL- GASTON DEFFERRE; COMMUNISTS- ROBERT BALLANGER.

3. THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY IS DIRECTLY ELECTED BY ALL 490 DEPUTIES. EDGAR FAURE WAS ELECTED ON APRIL 2 BY 274 VOTES AGAINST SOCIALIST PIERRE MAUROY WHO RECEIVED 180 VOTES. FAURE WAS PRESIDENT

POMPIDOU' S PERSONAL CHOICE FOR THE ASSEMBLY' S PRESIDENCY.
THE PRESIDENT REPORTEDLY BACKED FAURE, WHO IS ONE OF THE FEW
GAULLISTS WITH SOLID LEFT- OF- CENTER CREDENTIALS, TO SIGNAL HIS WILLING-

NESS TO WORK CLOSELY WITH ALL ELEMENTS IN THE ASSEMBLY, INCLUDING
THE OPPOSITION. FAURE WAS ALSO BACKED BY REFORMERS. PERSONAL
RELATIONS BETWEEN POMPIDOU AND FAURE HAVE AT TIMES BEEN STRAINED
AND POMPIDOU MAY ALSO HAVE PREFERRED TO SEE FAURE PRESIDING OVER
THE ASSEMBLY RATHER THAN OVER THE IMPORTANT MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
AFFAIRS WHICH HE HELD IN THE LAST GOVERNMENT. ALSO, FAURE' S NEW
POSITION EFFECTIVELY HEADS OFF THE FORMATION OF A FOURTH GOVERNMENT
COALITION PARLIAMENTARY GROUP UNDER FAURE' S LEADERSHIP WHICH COULD
HAVE INCLUDED 40 TO 50 DEPUTIES CARVED OUT OF THE RANKS OF THE UDR.
A FORMER FOURTH REPUBLIC PREMIER AND MINISTER IN NUMEROUS FORTHER
AND FIFTH REPUBLIC GOVERNMENTS, FAURE BRINGS TO ASSEMBLY POST
POLITICAL EMINENCE AND AN UNUSUAL DEGREE OF ASTUTENESS. HIS
PARTICULAR FORTE IS RECONCILING CONFLICTING POINTS OF VIEW AND PER-
SONALITIES, WHICH SHOULD BE HELPFUL IN PRESIDING OVER THE NEW
ASSEMBLY, MORE DIVIDED THAN ITS PREDECESSOR, AND IN ESTABLISHING
BETTER EXECUTIVE- LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS. THE FACT THAT FAURE SOUGHT THE

JOB AND UNDOUBTEDLY SEES IT AS A POSSIBLE SPRINGBOARD FOR THE 1976
PRESENTIAL RACE IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE NEW IMPORTANCE HE AND
OTHERS ATTACH TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, AS A RESULT OF THE OUTCOME
OF THE ELECTIONS. WITH 180 VOTES, PIERRE MAUROY WAS ACCORDED ALL
POSSIBLE LEFT- OF- CENTER SUPPORT, WHICH INDICATES THAT COMMUNIST-
SOCIALIST- LEFT RADIACAL UNITY HOLDING FIRM IN FIRST KEY ASSEMBLY VOTES.

4. THE OTHER PRINCIPAL ASSEMBLY POSTS ARE ALLOTTED TO THE ASSEMBLY
PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS ROUGHLY ACCORDING TO THE SIZE OF THEIR REPRE-
SENTATION IN THE ASSEMBLY. HOWEVER, WITH THE PRESIDENCY GOING TO
EDGAR FAURE, THE UDR WAS ALLOCATED ONLY ONE VICE PRESIDENT,
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ROLAND NUMGESSER. THE OTHER FIVE ASSEMBLY VICE PRESIDENTS ARE
MARCAL ANTHONIOZ (IR), PIERRE ABELIN (REFORMER), ANDRE' LABBARERE
(SOCIALIST), PAUL ALDUY (SOCIALIST) AND LEON FEIX (COMMUNIST). THE
THREE QUESTEURS (TOP HONARARY ASSEMBLY ADMINISTRATORS) ARE LUCIEN
NEUWIRTH (UDR), MICHEL JAQUET (IR) AND RAOUL BAYOU (SOCIALIST).
OTH THE TWELVE SECRETARIES, FIVE ARE UDR, THREE ARE COMMUNISTS,
TWO ARE CU, ONE IS SOCIALIST AND ONE IS A REFORMER (THEIR NAMES

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GAC-01 SAJ-01 MBFR-03 EURE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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ARE INCLUDED IN AN AIRGRAM BEING POUCHED TO THE DEPARTMENT).

5. ELECTION OF STANDING COMMITTEE PRESIDENTS AND OTHER COMMITTEE OFFICIALS CAUSED FIRST ACrimonious CONFRONTATION BETWEEN MAJORITY AND OPPOSITION IN NEW ASSEMBLY. MEMBERSHIP ON THESE COMMITTEES IS PROPORTIONAL TO STRENGTH OF PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS, BUT ELECTION OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENTS, VICE PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, ETC., IS BY MAJORITY VOTE. THUS, MAJORITY CAN, IF IT CHOOSES, RESERVE TOP POSTS FOR ITSELF

. MAJORITY LEADERS REPORTEDLY OFFERED LEFT OPPOSITION PARTIES THREE VICE PRESIDENCIES AND A SECRETARY ON EACH COMMITTEE. LEFT LEADERS INSISTED ON TWO PRESIDENCIES, SEVEN VICE- PRESIDENCIES AND SEVERN SECRETARYSHIPS. WHEN THEIR REQUESTS WERE REFUSED, THEY WALKED OUT OF DELIBERATIONS. SIMILARLY,

MAJORITY SAID TO HAVE OFFERED REFORMERS PRESIDENCY OF PRODUCTION AND EXCHANGE COMMITTEE. REFORMER LEADER JEAN LECANUET HAD HOPED FOR PRESIDENCY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OR AT LEAST FINANCE COMMITTEE, AND TURNED DOWN MAJORITY OFFER. (MEMBERSHIP AND LIST OF OFFICIALS OF ALL COMMITTEES BEING POUCHED).

6. COMMENT. DURING THE FIFTH REPUBLIC, COMMITTEE PRESIDENTS HAVE EXERCISED LITTLE INFLUENCE ON GOF POLICIES AS THE EXECUTIVE HAS DOMINATED THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH. PARLIAMENT SITS ONLY SIX MONTHS OF THE YEAR, IN TWO, 3- MONTH SESSIONS, AND NEARLY ALL LEGISLATION IS DRAFTED AND INTRODUCED BY THE GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, THE NEW ASSEMBLY APPEARS DETERMINED TO PLAY A LARGER ROLE AND TO WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN FORMING POLICY. WE DO NOT EXPECT, HOWEVER, THAT THE ELECTION OF MAURICE COUVE DE MURVILLE AS PRESIDENT OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE IN ANY WAY PORTENDS A RETURN TO ORTHODOX GUALLIST FOREIGN POLICY POSITIONS THAT THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER SYMBOLIZES. POMPIDOU, WITH THE SELECTION OF MICHEL JORBERT AS MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HAS SIGNALLED IN THE CLEAREST POSSIBLE WAY HIS INTENTION TO KEEP FOREIGN POLICY REINS FIRMLY IN HIS OWN HANDS. HOW THE EXECUTIVE - LEGISLATIVE RELATIONSHIP WILL DEVELOP DURING THE REMAINING THREE YEARS OF POMPIDOU' S CURRENT TERM IS UNCLEAR. IN HIS MESSAGE TO THE ASSEMBLY (REFTEL), THE PRESIDENT APPEARED TO BE PROPOSING A NEW, MORE COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP. HE SAID " THERE ARE NOT GOOD AND LESS GOOD DEPUTIES, ONLY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE", AND OFFERED TO WORK WITH THE MAJORITY AND THE OPPOSITION ALIKE. HE ALSO PROPOSED THAT THE EXECUTIVE AND THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH TOGETHER HAMMER OUT A CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM WHICH WOULD REDUCE THE PRESIDENTIAL TERM OF OFFICE, BEGINNING WITH THE 1976 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. THIS IS THE SORT OF REFORM WHICH FIFTH REPUBLIC PRESIDENTS WOULD NORMALLY HAVE SOUGHT TO ACHIEVE BY SHORT- CIRCUITING PARLIAMENT WITH A REFERENDUM. WHATEVER GOOD WILL MAY HAVE BEEN GENERATED BY THE PRESIDENT' S MESSAGE AMONG CENTER AND LEFT OPPOSITION ELEMENTS HAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BEEN CONSIDERABLY DISSIPATED BY THE AUTOCRATIC BEHAVIOR OF GOVERNMENT PARTY LEADERS, PARTICULARLY THE UDR, IN PARCELING OUT STANDING COMMITTEE POSTS. IF THE GOVERNMENT COALITION INTENDS TO ESTABLISH AN OPENING TO THE CENTER- CENTER- LEFT AT SOME POINT BEFORE THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, THE QUARREL OVER COMMITTEE POSTS IS NOT AN AUSPICIOUS BEGINNING.

DECON 12/31/74.
IRWIN

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Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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